**Why am I a Tither?**

by Dan Betzer

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Many years ago when just starting in the ministry, I asked a local banker to assist me with my budget and the handling of our money. He kindly agreed to do so, but sharply resisted the concept of tithing to the church. He told me that I could not afford to give 10 percent of my income to our Lord’s work. I told him I could not afford not to. I said I had definite reasons for paying tithe to God, and I gave him those reasons.

Before giving those reasons to you, let me make it abundantly clear that I do not tithe so God will bless me. God is not an investment broker. Someone once told me he decided how much money he would like to earn in a given year and then proceeded to give God 10 percent of that projected figure. I don’ judge his giving, but I could not attempt to manipulate God. Tithing is not seed faith. Tithing comes purely out of obedience, out of love, and out of immense gratitude to the God who created and sustains me.

Through the (many) years of our marriage, Darlene and I make sure God’s tithes have been faithfully taken from our account each Lord’s Day. I am not talking about love offerings here or missions support or various and sundry other areas of giving to the Lord’s work. I am speaking only of tithe.

*Why Do I Tithe?*

**First, I tithe out of gratitude to God for His blessing.** There is an important distinction here: I am not tithing in order to be blessed; I have already been blessed, so I tithe. I am grateful to God from whom all blessings flow.

Sometimes, I am asked, Dan do you tithe on your gross income or your net income? The answer is My gross income. Our gratitude is not some legalistic mumbo jumbo that allows us to get out of giving to God. We are so thankful of the faithfulness of our Creator that out of hearts of love and gratitude we give gladly!

The source of all our blessing is God. Therefore, I tithe 10 percent of all my income to the house of God as a way of showing my gratitude.

**Second, I tithe because I want my church to progress.** Christ loved the Church and gave himself for it. I believe in my pastor. I believe in the work our local church accomplishes. I am a participant in its outreach.

My wife and children receive the Word of the Lord from that place through the pulpit, through the Sunday School, through the vacation Bible school, through the various evangelistic endeavors. We are ministered to by the choir, the special musician, the guest artist. The church is a place of fellowship. Many of our dearest friends have been found in the house of God.

But the church cannot function without funding. Pastors who faithfully serve us deserve a good wage. The utilities must be paid. If there is a need for additions to the building, someone has to be paid to do that. Supplies must be secured. A hundred and one different needs are represented in the ministry of the church.

I think it is demeaning for the bride of Christ, the church, to have to rely on raffles, contests, and gimmicks to survive. Suppose I entered one of our city’s fine restaurants and enjoyed a good meal. I was served well by the attendants, and my hunger was well satisfied. As I walked out, what if I told the cashier, “Well, thank you very much. Perhaps the owner could raffle off a watch or something to pay the bill.” Listen, friend, I would be taken to jail immediately.

Yet that is what so many people do to the church. There they are fed. There they receive special prayer and help. There they are taught the Word of God. There they are married and family members buried and as they walk out they say, “Well, thank you very much. By the way, Pastor, how do you fund allof this?”‘And should the pastor or one of the board members talk about money, these spiritual freeloaders get miffed and walk out in a huff.

Sir, if you believe in the church, then support it with your tithes and offering. That’s God’s way of funding the local church. Anyone can be a critic. Anyone can evade responsibility necessary to keep the church on track.

**Third**, and probably most important of all, **I tithe because God’s Word instructs me to.** It becomes a matter of obedience. Jesus said, If ye love me, keep my commandments (John 14:15). The Pharisees, who were the meanest people in town, had made religion a con game. Jesus soundly rebuked them for it. But he commended them for proper tithing. He said this, “Ought ye to have done” (Luke 11:42).

Whether I ever see one nickel of my tithe again, whether or not I agree with the way the local church officials spend the money, is beside the point. I don’t have to answer to God for the way my church board spends the money; but I do have to answer to God for my responsibility in obedience. Once I have given in love to my Heavenly Father, the responsibility rests upon another’s shoulders, not mine.

Furthermore, tithing does not relieve me of my responsibility in missions, evangelism, and other giving. That’s above and beyond the tithe.

You may wonder how I can afford to do that. Well, when Darlene and I barely made enough to live on, we gave tithes and offerings. And God has seen to it that we never lacked for sustenance. He has been so faithful in every way.

Will I rob Him now? Will I disobey Him now? Will I try to evade my responsibility now? Will I fail to show Christian maturity now? NEVER!! I will be faithful! I will serve God because I love Him. And because He has blessed me in a thousand and one marvelous ways, I will tithe of my income to Him; and I will do it with a cheerful and thankful heart!